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Chairman King, Reps. McCaul, Rogers, Pearce call on Ambassador to account for alleged Mexican military border incursions

Members of Committee on Homeland Security also ask Secretaries Rice, Chertoff to investigate issue

Washington, D.C. (Friday, Jan. 27, 2006)—Members of the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security sent letters to top Mexican and U.S. officials requesting information regarding recent media reports of incursions into the United States by individuals appearing to be members of the Mexican military.

Chairman Peter T. King (R-NY) and Reps. Mike Rogers (R-AL), Michael McCaul (R-TX), and Steve Pearce (R-NM), sent a letter to Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. Carlos de Icaza seeking answers for the recent alleged Mexican military incursions into the United States. The Members also sent letters to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff requesting that they investigate this issue and report back to Congress.

“This is yet another example of the clear security problems we face along our southwest border,” King said. “These episodes further illustrate the need for comprehensive border security reform. We must ensure the security of our homeland, and that means gaining full operational control of our borders.”

“Reports of incursions and armed confrontations by Mexican military personnel make a mockery of our border security efforts,” Rogers said. “We need to know why this is happening, and we need to know now.”

“We are concerned about reports regarding individuals in Mexican military uniforms aiding and abetting drug traffickers across the border into the United States,” McCaul said. “The latest events in Texas have raised the specter of this issue since law enforcement on the U.S. side observed Mexican military humvees equipped with .50 caliber weapons escorting drug traffickers back into Mexico to provide them safe haven. We anticipate the Committee on Homeland Security will be holding hearings on this matter.”

“Regardless of the true source of these incursions, the Mexican government must not evade its responsibility to help us stop illegal activity on the border,” Pearce said. “I hope that this letter will lead to a more productive partnership toward that goal.”

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Recent media reports have described incidents in which individuals appearing to be members of the Mexican military assisted in illegal drug trafficking into the United States.

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, there have been 231 such incursions since 1996, an average of more than 28 per year.

“This is an issue that deserves the attention of Secretary Rice and Secretary Chertoff,” King said. “And the Senate needs to follow the House’s lead in passing a border security measure that will help bring episodes such as these to an end.”

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